

Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston
Marine Safety Unit Galveston
Vessel Traffic Service Houston

Marine Safety Information Bulletin 04-05

Automatic Information System (AIS) Enforcement

March 29, 2005

On April 1, 2005, the pre-enforcement period for Automatic Information System (AIS) requirements will end, and full enforcement of AIS requirements will be conducted for all foreign and domestic vessels operating in U. S. waters to which these requirements apply.

The AIS requirements apply to the following vessels on international voyages:

- * Self-Propelled vessels of 65 feet or more in length in commercial service and on international voyages.
- * Passenger vessels of 150 gross tons^a or more
- * Tankers, regardless of tonnage not later than the first safety survey after July 1, 2003
- * Vessels, other than Passenger vessels or tankers, of 300 gross tons or more

The AIS requirements also apply to the following vessels when operating in Vessel Traffic Services (VTS), Vessel Movement Reporting Systems (VMRS) listed in 33 CFR 161.12 (c).

- * Self propelled vessels of 65 feet or more in length, other than fishing vessels and passenger vessels certificated to carry less than 151 passengers-for-hire, in commercial service
- * Towing vessels of 26 feet or more in length and more than 600 horsepower, in commercial service
- * Passenger vessels certificated to carry more than 150 passengers-for-hire.

^a *Tonnage, as defined under the International Tonnage Convention*

Vessels that do not have AIS installed will be denied entry into port, and vessels found in port without AIS will be detained in port. To avoid delays, operators of vessels intending to call in any U. S. ports must have the system installed per 33 CFR 164.46 and SOLAS Regulation V/19.2.4. Specific guidance on AIS system installations can be found at: <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/enav/ais/default.htm>.

Vessels with AIS installed that is inoperative, or operating with discrepancies, must request a deviation prior to entering a Captain of the Port (COTP) zone, per 33 CFR 164.53(a). Only one-time deviations will be considered. Requests for multiple deviations over an extended period of time cannot be granted by the COTP, and will be referred to Coast Guard Headquarters for consideration.

AIS operations may be secured in unique circumstances. Where its use will **not** compromise safety or security of the vessel, such as during the transfer of flammable or combustible liquid/gaseous cargos in any lightering area, or, if under imminent hostile threat or attack. Notification by the most effective means should be made to the cognizant COTP or VTS in the event the AIS is secured, and an entry shall be made in the Ship's log.

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